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knowledge, that it possessed charms to soothe his breast, attuned to strains of sorrow by the wrongs inflicted on our countrymen, the tones of our harp had such an effect upon his heart, as to force him to write what he has written upon the subject.

Notwithstanding the many far-fetched arguments, which Mr. Ledwich brings forward to reconcile this with the general tenor of his work, which seems to be, to point out to us our inferiority to the British nation, and the gratitude we owe to them for coming amongst us to be our teachers, yet if what he says be true (which we have more than one reason for doubting) that "it is not an ill founded opinion, that the Irish, in 1377, were as uncivilized as the s vages of North America," I cannot believe that we could have arrived at that state of refinement in the science of music, which Cambrensis allows us to have done; and on the other hand, it is not to be believed, that he would have given us this applause, if (as Mr. Ledwich says) our superior skill in it had not extorted it from him. If this reasoning be just, it will follow, that this nation was not so barbarous at the time of the English invasion, as it is by some represented to have been. A.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

I HAVE of late turned my attention to the causes of the sickness, so frequently fatal to Europeans, who visit the hot climates of Africa, the West Indies and America, with a view to ascertain whether all-bountiful Nature had not, along with this evil, provided a counterpoising remedy, in like manner as she has bestowed cures for the poison of the scorpion and rattlesnake, wherever these creatures are found; and, by means of the dreadful tornado, rendered the air salubrious and healthful in the countries subject to it. The result given in the following hints, I hope will not be unacceptable to the public; most happy if they shall be the means of preserving the life of a fellow-creature, and of dissipating in part that gloom which overspreads the fairest fields for commercial enterprize that the world affords.

Man is the only animal which yields to the baneful effects of climate, if we except the few which he domesticates and feeds, according to his convenience, or ideas of fitness; the rest of the animal creation, prompted by that instinct which reasoneth not, and therefore cannot deceive, partakes of a provision which an all-wise and beneficent Creator never fails to make for his creatures, wherever the climate renders it essential to their preservation.

This is nothing more or less than common *Salt*, which surrounds the islands in the form of briny waves, and is found on the inland parts of the Continents in salt-springs, marshes, rocks, and plains covered with salt.

At the approach of the sickly season, all the birds, beasts, serpents, and insects of the forests and plains, travel to, and eat greedily of this salt, for a continuance of days, and the effects are precisely similar to that which is seen every year, in our latitudes, on salmon; after they have visited the ocean for a similar purpose, they become not only proof against the unhappy vicissitudes of climate, but attain a degree of freshness, strength, and beauty, to which they were previously strangers.

If such are the effects of salt on other animals, why may not man receive from it a similar benefit? In the most unfavourable view it cannot do harm, and even he that is least sanguine of its success, will acknowledge it to deserve a trial.

Perth, July, 1809. P. T.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

I HAVE read, with infinite pleasure, a number of excellent papers in your Miscellany, on the subject of Education, and National Schools, and was in expectation, that before this time, some of the London, and other respectable publications would have also taken up the subject, and by exhibiting the plan of your correspondent *Simplex* (which appeared in your eighth number) to their readers, the attention of members of parliament, and all persons of influence, in every part of the United Kingdom, would have

been more generally directed to an object of so much utility to this country. The dissemination of sound instruction amongst the lower classes of society, as has been well observed, is certainly an object of the first national importance; and, an intelligent and high-spirited population is the only safe-guard of the independence of the British empire, and the surest pledge of the permanency of our liberties.—But many have too hastily adopted the erroneous opinion, and I fear our legislators are amongst the number, that a system of national instruction for the poor would be unfavourable to sound morals and peaceable government, by making the lower orders of the community impatient of their condition, more turbulent subjects, more haughty to their superiors, and even less useful to themselves, by abstracting their minds too much from their ordinary occupations, and encreasing their sensibility to the evils of life. But let the matter be fairly brought to the test of experience and observation, and this important question in legislation will not be difficult to answer. Do we not find that the peasantry of Scotland, and a few other places, who enjoy the advantage of school establishments, are superior, not only in point of information, but also in morality and virtue, to the peasantry of the other countries of Europe who have not the benefit of similar establishments. The Scottish peasantry have now enjoyed the benefit of national instruction for near the space of two centuries; as it appears from unquestionable authority, that in the year 1646, their own parliament passed an act for the establishment of a school in every parish throughout the kingdom, for the express purpose of educating the poor; "a law," says Dr. Currie, "that may challenge comparison with any act of legislation to be found in the records of history, whether we consider the wisdom of the ends in view, the simplicity of the means employed, or the provisions made to render these means effectual to their purpose." A law, similar to the above, was passed some years ago by the parliament of Ireland; but the fund was diverted from its purpose, and the measure entirely frustrated. It is to be regretted that our legislators did not perceive the numerous advantages that would have arisen from the adoption of this excellent statute; as there never was a nation that would have derived more benefit from such a measure. The minds of the Irish peasantry are naturally open, generous, and noble, and highly susceptible of virtuous improvement; and there is no question, but a proper system of national instruction would have contributed most powerfully to the peace and security of this unfortunate country, by expunging barbarism from our manners, by banishing the low delights of drunkenness and frivolous amusements, and opening to the mind new and dignified sources of pleasure; and by disposing it to contemplate the happiness which is to be derived from the practice of those virtues, industry and economy; by increasing the powers of self-government; and, in short, by introducing amongst the poorer classes, cleanliness, contentment, and independence, with all the blessings attending a civilized and virtuous peasantry. But the present system of education is extremely defective in almost every part of the country, and calls loudly for amendment. In most of the country schools, hardly any thing more than the mere rudiments of education is taught; and unless where an individual, by a chance time, continues his studies with a view of advancing his fortune, very few remain longer at school than what enables them to read a few chapters in the Old and New Testament, and even that in such an indistinct and slovenly manner, as to be totally incomprehensible to themselves, as well as to their auditors!

The mode also in which most teachers at present obtain their wages, contributes in many respects to repress learning amongst the poorer classes. When a teacher of superior abilities commences in a country place, he naturally expects higher wages than what are given to the many unqualified teachers, that are everywhere around him; this he can only obtain by teaching the richer people's children, who are able to pay him; hence the poorer are totally excluded, or obliged to send their children to some

runagate, whose moral character serves only to encourage vice and immorality in the neighbourhood where he resides, and whose mode of teaching serves rather to repress than encourage a proper relish for intellectual improvement. But was the plan of Simplex, or one of a similar nature, adopted, these inconveniences would soon be done away, and a valuable store of information would be brought within the reach of the poorest peasant in the nation; while the middle ranks would have a greater inducement, and every opportunity they could desire, of refining their tastes, improving their understandings, and of laying in a precious store of information for their succeeding years; and peace and prosperity, with every social virtue, would soon flourish in our island. But although the plan should not, at this time, meet with that encouragement from government, which it so justly deserves, yet let us fondly cherish the pleasing expectation, that, at a more distant period, when the present war shall be terminated, some great and godlike genius shall arise in the British senate, and get an act passed for establishing a system of national instruction in every section of the British empire. Such a statesman would deserve more from his country, than all the warriors and politicians from the days of Alexander the Great to the present hour.

G.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

THE interest which your periodical work takes in every thing that relates to your country, induces an Irish visitor at Cushendall to offer you a topographic sketch of that village.

Local situation, natural curiosities, adjacent antiquities and ruins, as well as the morals, manners, and language of the people, combine to render Cushendall a place of some interest.

It is pleasantly situated, in a valley on the sea-coast, thirty-six miles from Belfast, and about ten from Fair-head, the most northern promontory in Ireland. It contains sixty houses, and three hundred inhabitants. Seven of these houses are licensed for the sale of groceries and spirits. Eight annual fairs are held here. Its inhabitants are generally farmers on a small scale, which, aided by traffic, fishing, and labour, produces a tolerably comfortable support for their families.

A plain, but commodious parish church stands at a convenient distance from the north, and a chapel of a similar description, for Catholic worship, at the south end of the village. An established post arrives three times in each week, for the accommodation of this village, and its vicinity.

In speaking of the manners of those villagers, my mind fully acquits me of adulation, when I assert that the inhabitants of Cushendall have a fair claim to a full share of that character for hospitality, for which the Irish nation is so justly celebrated. They are attentive, kind and obliging to the stranger who sojourns among them; but, while he may freely commit his person and his purse to their disposal, the friend to refined morality will too frequently have his feelings wounded by the profanation of the Divine Name.—Ah! my countrymen—children of kindness, while you are exact in your duty to man, remember also what you owe to your God.—Ye daughters of Erin, whose lips are so delicately formed for love and praise, defile them not with profanation.

Being from the bottom of my heart an Irishman, you see that in this sketch I retain the ancient name of the village, Cushendall. Although *calla*, in the Irish language signifies a *swan*, yet tradition says it obtained this name from a predatory Scot, who fell by the hand of Ossian, named Dallas, whose tomb many of the natives recollect to have seen on the coast; but all traces of it are now obliterated, by a road made some years ago by the shore to Cushendun. This village is also called *Newton-glens*, a name, I understand, lately given it; I pretend not to say what motive effected this change. I know it has been the practice of the Anglo-Irish, in the last century, to deface, as much as possible, every thing that is national; but this, it may be presumed, could not be the motive of the present proprietor; for, it is but justice to him to say, that the